



Lowell Public Schools

Maximizing Options for Families

A Safe School Re-Opening Plan for Students
Within the Context of COVID-19

August 05, 2020



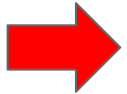
Required DESE Submissions

Overview of Two-Step Process for District Reopening Plan Submissions

Districts will submit their reopening plans to DESE through a two-step process:



Step 1: By July 31, districts must complete and submit a *preliminary reopening plan summary* to DESE. Districts will fill out an [online form](#) that consists of two parts, which are outlined below and detailed later in this document. This form will allow DESE to collect key summary information about districts' reopening models and other planning considerations.



- **Step 2: By August 10**, districts must finalize their *comprehensive plan documents*, submit them to DESE, and release them publicly to their communities. This additional time will provide districts with an opportunity to incorporate any desired changes based on additional guidance DESE may release later in July, such as guidance on transportation and athletics. We strongly recommend that you work with your school committee (or equivalent board) on policy questions relevant to the final plan before submission.

*"It is clear that families want to have choices when it comes to how we return to school in September. With this in mind, if the local health data continue to move in the right direction and it remains safe for our students to be on campus, **we are prepared to offer families an option of either full-time, remote learning or full-time, in-person learning to start the school year.**"*



Finalizing Our School Re-Opening Plan

- How much space do we have for safe, in-person learning?
- What process will families use to select the option that best meets their needs?
- What amendments are needed to our school assignment policy?
- What are the strengths and challenges of the rotating, cohort hybrid model that is not currently recommended in the LPS plan?





How much space do we have for safe, in-person learning?

The capacity for in-person learning will vary at each school facility based on an analysis of square footage and air quality in conventional and unconventional classroom spaces, following strict safety standards.



	Bailey	Cardinal	Greenhalge	Laura Lee	Lincoln	Adle Day	McAuliffe	McAvinnue
CAMPUS SEATS SAFELY AVAILABLE								
PPE								
Disposable Nitrile Gloves								
Disposable Gowns								
Eye Protection								
Face Shields to be issued to each staff member								
Masks								
N-95 Ventilating Masks								
FACILITY								
Windows which open								
Windows which do not open								
Filters in Building								
Filters remaining to be changed								
SAFETY EQUIPMENT								
# of foggers								
# of handwashing stations								
Air purifiers in school now								
Air purifiers anticipated by 15SEP2020s								
Dividers at Central Office								
STAFFING								
Custodians Assigned								
SAFETY TRAINING								
Hours Planned for Staff								
Hours Planned for Students								
Training Planned for distribution to parents								



What process will
families use to
select the option
that best meets their
needs?



Be informed and
stay engaged!

- Make sure you sign up for email notifications, follow LPS on social media and check the LPS website
- Attend an info session about the LPS Learning Plan for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. A schedule will be shared with families once finalized.



Read through "A Safe School Reopening
Plan for Students"



Decide whether in-person or remote learning is
the best for each of your children
and for your family



Declare whether you want in-person learning
during the opt-in period (August 19-27)

Key Dates

- **August 19** - The opt-in form for in-person learning will be made available on this date and sent to families.
- **August 27** - The last date for families to submit the opt-in form for in-person learning.
- **September 4** - Starting on this date, families will be notified of their school placement.
- **September 17** - First day of school, pending approval from the state.



What amendments are needed to our school assignment policy?



Assignment Lottery

- If a family would like in-person instruction on campus, they will opt-in through an application.
 - LPS will post this application on the district website and will share this form via email and on social media. The application period will be August 19 - August 27, 2020.
- Families wishing to participate in remote learning will **not** need to fill out an application.
- If more families opt-in than there are available seats (based on revised capacity numbers), a lottery will be held to determine who will be able to attend school in-person.
- A student's place in the lottery will be determined by a weighting system:
 - Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
 - Students identified with a 504 Plan (for learning related accommodations)
 - Students identified for McKinney Vento services
 - Students identified as English Learners (ELs)
 - Students in entry grades of each level (K-2; 5th grade; 9th grade)
 - Families who have more than one child enrolled in Lowell Public Schools
 - Students of Lowell Public Schools personnel



What amendments are needed to our school assignment policy?

Kindergarten Considerations

- Families who registered their child for kindergarten between May 26-June 30 were entered into the kindergarten lottery. Families who secured a seat through the lottery will be eligible to attend that school in the **2021-2022** school year.
- This coming school year (**2020-2021**), all kindergarten students will be assigned to their neighborhood school - defined as the school which is in walkable distance to the student's home. This assignment will be for one school year only.
- There may be some exceptions (i.e. students who have older siblings in the school for which they secured a seat through the lottery will be eligible to remain in that school for the 2020-21 school year).
- Families opting for in-person instruction will be notified about their placement for the 2020-2021 school year beginning on September 4.





What amendments are needed to our school assignment policy?



Transportation Considerations

- Transportation options will be limited this year due to safety and social distancing guidelines. Families will be encouraged to provide transportation to and from their child's school. A lottery will be held for the limited transportation seats available.
- Families who prefer an in-person learning seat at a school within walking distance to their home may make a transfer request to this school for consideration. The transfer would only be for this school year and depends upon available space at that school.
- A transfer form will be available on the district website and shared with families.

	Benefits to Students and Families	Safety Risks within the context of COVID-19
<u>Last year</u> .75 miles for Elementary 1.5 miles for Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide reliable means of transportation for families for elementary school students and middle-schoolers • Busing reduces traffic at the beginning and end of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of exposure on buses is significant • Challenges in adequately cleaning buses • Social distancing reduces seats on buses • Legality and challenges of safely modifying buses to provide more seats. • More seats would increase risk of exposure to more students • Currently a safe option if 75% or more are enrolled in remote learning
<u>Legal Requirement</u> 2 miles or more for K-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces risk of exposure on buses and risk of transmission to other students, staff, and students' family members • Best to maximize number of days of in-person education we can provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some families will find it difficult to find a reliable means of transportation for elementary and middle school students • Weighing risk of some walking routes versus danger of exposure to COVID-19 to whole system



What are the strengths and challenges of the rotating, cohort hybrid model that is not currently recommended in the LPS plan?

	Opportunities	Challenges
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could enable more students to access in-person learning on a part-time basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the number of available full-time, in-person seats • Requires teachers to specialize in both in-person and remote instruction • Requires teachers to monitor student learning in both in-person and remote environments simultaneously
Operations and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could enable transportation capacity to more closely approximate on-campus availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater number of individuals accessing buildings could increase risk of exposure, requiring scheduled days off for deep cleaning • Requires coordination between cohort schedules and family routines • A third staffing model would need to be developed based on an even more complex secondary master schedule
Family and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretically offers a “third” enrollment option for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of cohort schedules with family routines nears impossible - families would have “forced choice” of a certain cohort, limiting desirability of the model • Adapting to new routine potentially requires more time than would be available prior to the health data requiring a shift in the model